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Senator Andrew Maynard
Representative Antonio Guerrero
Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2300
Hartford, CT 06106

Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, Senator Boucher, Representative O'Dea and members of the Transportation Committee:

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today on HB 6818, An Act Concerning the Establishment of Electronic Tolls at the State's Borders. I cannot state enough how strongly opposed I am to this proposal. As the state senator for the several border towns in north central Connecticut for the past 22 years, I have been a relentless voice of opposition to the reinstallation of tolls not only in my district, but anywhere in the State of Connecticut.

Connecticut's border towns are not welcoming to this proposal. Emails and calls from my constituents have been plentiful. Traveling motorists looking to avoid the added fee may be inclined to use secondary roadways to circumvent toll stations. Putting tolls in border towns like Enfield would crowd local streets with cars that leave the interstate to avoid the tolls. With the installation of tolls, travelers will divert to local roads in order to avoid tolls. Thousands of vehicles a day will revert to this practice. Route 5 would see major gridlock. Such diversion to smaller, local roads causes immense wear. Projects to restore the damage that will inevitably be done will put a strain on already over-strained local governments.

In north central Connecticut, we frequently travel across the Massachusetts border. For example, a great many of my constituents work at Mass Mutual and travel across the border multiple times every week. They would be unfairly impacted by the tolls. In effect, border tolls would add another tax onto many of our residents who simply want to get to work.

My border towns fear that these proposed tolls will affect business. They worry travelers will be less likely to visit and invest in their communities. Connecticut's border towns would lose a great deal of revenue.

Not only will this create traffic and congestion among these border communities, but there are environmental and infrastructural impacts. The increased amount of vehicles would result in poor air quality as well as damaged roads which the state and municipalities would be responsible for fixing.

Reinstating tolls is essentially another tax to maintain Connecticut's costly spending habits. Tolls would be another financial burden on residents who pay sales, income and gas taxes. Rather than spend money the state does not have, we in the legislature should adopt policies that reduce government excess in order to maintain our infrastructure and necessary services. It is time to support our state's families and businesses as well as welcome travelers into our state.

I-91 Tolls Impact On Local Roads

- Enfield**
 - Route 5
 - Route 192
 - Route 220
 - Route 190
 - Brainard Road
 - Washington Road
 - Nevins Ave
 - Roosevelt Blvd
 - Till Street
 - Booth Road
 - Shaker Road
- Suffield**
 - Route 159
 - Route 75
 - Route 187
 - Holiday Ave
 - Hickory Street
 - Russell Ave
 - Mapleton Ave
 - Thompsonville Road

